

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, OREP (HUMPHREY, HUBERT AND SCOTT, HUGH), UR, US

SUBJECT: CODEL HUMPHREY: THE EMIGRATION ISSUE

REF: STATE 153265

1. FROM WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GLEAN HERE FROM SENATORS AND STAFF, CODEL'S MEETINGS WITH JEWISH ACTIVISTS WERE CENTERED ON QUESTION OF POSSIBLE STEPS WHICH COULD BE TAKEN TO BREAK UP TRADE-EMIGRATION LOG JAM. ACTIVISTS APPARENTLY SHOWED SOME FLEXIBILITY AND DESIRE TO BRING ABOUT COMPROMISE BUT DID NOT REJECT SPIRIT OF JACKSON AMENDMENT AS METHOD OF PRESSURING SOVIETS ON EMIGRATION. THEY REPORTEDLY FELT THE "ESSENCE" OF THE JACKSON AMENDMENT SHOULD BE MAINTAINED BUT THAT IT AND THE STEVENSON AMENDMENT SHOULD BE MORE CLOSELY GEARED TO REALITIES OF THE OFFICIAL SOVIET POSITION. ACTIVISTS, FOR INSTANCE, TOLD SENATORS THAT ANY TALK OF NUMBERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE APPROACHING 60,000 FIGURES, WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

2. ACTIVISTS SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT REAL PROBLEM FOR SOVIETS WAS CREDITS, PARTICULARLY 300 MILLION DOLLAR LIMIT SET BY STEVENSON AMENDMENT. ACTIVISTS ALSO ENCOURAGED SENATORS TO TRY TO PROMOTE "REGULARITY" IN EMIGRATION PROCEDURES RATHER THAN SET NUMERICAL STANDARD BY WHICH SOVIET BEHAVIOR WOULD BE JUDGED. IN SUM, WE BELIEVE ACTIVISTS SHOWED SOME FLEXIBILITY, BUT DID NOT GO AS FAR AS PARKS' ARTICLE HAD INDICATED THEY MIGHT. ALTHOUGH A FORMAL PROPOSAL HAS BEEN WORKED OUT, IT WAS APPARENTLY NOT

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PRESENTED TO THE SENATORS. ACTIVISTS HAVE NOT CAST JACKSON

AMENDMENT OUT THE WINDOW AND CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ITS BASIC THRUST. IN THEIR VIEW, ANY SEARCH FOR A NEW FORMULA ON EMIGRATION SHOULD NOT GIVE UP ON SUBSTANCE OF JACKSON AMEDMENT. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF THE IDEA PUT FORTH BY SOME OF THE SENATORS THAT ANY NEW ACTION SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (APPARENTY SOMEWHAT ALONG THE LINES OF THE "ROMANIAN FORMULA"). ALTHOUGH THE SENATORS WERE REPORTEDLY IMPRESSED WITH ACTIVIST GROUP'S PRESENTATION, PARTICULARLY THE FACT THAT THEY WERE WILLING TO SUBORDINTE THEIR PERSONAL PROBLEMS TO THE GENERAL QUESTION OF EMIGRATION, ONE ACTIVIST TOLD US THAT HE WAS "VERY DISAPPOINTED" WITH RESULTS OF MEETING.

3. BEHAVIOR OF ACTIVISTS WITH SENATORS CONFIRMS THAT SPLIT SHOULD BE SEEN MORE IN CONTEXT OF PERSONAL DIFFERENCES AMONG MEMBERS OF THE ACTIVIST COMMUNITY THAN IN TERMS OF DIFFERENCES ON SUBSTANCE. VIEWS OF BOTH GROUPS ON EMIGRATION QUESTION BASICALLY COINCIDE AS CAN BE SEEN IN FACT THAT ACTIVIST DELEGATION THAT MET WITH SENATORS WAS A JOINT ONE.

4. SENATORS THEMSELVES SEEM TO BE TALKING MORE OF COMPROMISE AND WORKING THINGS OUT IN QUIET WAY. THEY HAVE MADE THIS POINT TO SOVIETS CONTINUALLY IN MEETINGS HERE. SENATOR JAVITS PLEDGED HIMSELF TO FINDING A WAY OUT OF THE PRESENT IMPASSE AND VIRTUALLY EVERY SENATOR HAS COME OUT IN FAVOR OF EXPANDED TRADE. THEY HAVE TOLD SOVIETS THEIR "FACTS" ON EMIGRATION DO NOT CORRESPOND WITH SOVIET "FACTS" AND THEY HAVE ENCOURAGED SOVIETS TO BE REALISTIC AND PRACTICAL AND SHOW A SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE. ALTHOUGH NOT ALWAYS DIRECTLY, THEY HAVE TOLD SOVIETS THAT BOTH SIDES HAVE TO GIVE A LITTLE AND DO THINGS QUIETLY SO THAT EMIGRATION WILL RISE AS WELL AS LEVEL OF TRADE AND EXTENSION OF CREDITS. SEVERAL STAFF MEMBERS OF THE CODEL OBSERVED TO DEPT ESCORT OFFICER THAT EXCEPT IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT OF ACTION EARLY THIS FALL, NO CONGRESSIONAL ACTION SHOULD IN PRACTICE BE EXPECTED BEFORE 1977. IN TALKS WITH US, SENATORS SEEM TO BE FOCUSING ON STENVENSON AMDENDMENT (I.E., FINDING A WAY TO RAISE CREDIT CEILING) MORE AND MORE AS TARGET OF POSSIBLE INITIAL ACTION. BUT THEY HAVE NOT EXPLAINED HOW IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DEAL WITH JACKOSN AMENDMENT'S LINKAGE BETWEEN EMIGRATION AND CREDITS. OTHER SENATORS, HOWEVER, FOCUSED ON MFN AS KEY. WE DO NOT HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT SENATORS' THINKING IS VERY SPECIFIC AT THIS POINT.

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5. SOVIETS' POSITION IN ALL THIS, AS EXPRESSED DURING MEETINGS, HAS BEEN RIGID AND SIMPLISTIC. THEY USE SAME OLD TACTIC OF QUOTING FIGURES (E.G., 98 PERCENT OF EMIRGATION APPLICATIONS ARE APPROVED) AND HOLDING TO VIEW THAT PRESENT LOW EMIGRATION LEVEL IS STRICTLY DUE TO LACK OF DESIRE ON PART OF JEWS TO LEAVE. IN ESSENCE, THEY HAVE TOLD SENATORS THAT THEY CAN DO NOTHING TO CAUSE EMIGRATION TO RISE, SINCE IT IS FALLING IN A NATURAL WAY,

AND THAT SOLUTION TO PRESENT PROBLEMS IS TOTALLY UP TO U.S. CONGRESS. PONOMAREV SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT PRESIDENT FORD HAS ASKED CONGRESS TO HAVE ANOTHER LOOK AT TRADE ACT, BUT SOVIETS HAVE SHOWN NO WILLINGNESS TO RESPOND FLEXIBLY TO ANY CONGRESSIONAL INITIATIVE, NOR ANY OF THE REALISTIC, PRACTICAL APPROACHES SENATORS HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ENCOURAGE. WHETHER THIS IS MERELY A PUBLIC POSITION WHICH IN FACT DOES HAVE SOME GIVE IN IT IS SOMETHING WE ARE UNABLE TO DETERMINE.

6. FOREGOING WAS WRITTEN AS SENATORS WERE MEETING WITH BREZHNEV--OBVIOUSLY THEIR MOST IMPORTANT SESSION. WHILE WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY GIVE ON THIS ISSUE FROM HIM EITHER, IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE PREMATURE TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS ON THIS KEY QUESTION IN U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS UNTIL WE KNOW WHAT HE SAID ON THE SUBJECT.
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